

3/4/90

Dear Sam,

Last night "il asked me about something she'd seen in one of your recent letters that I did not recall, your reference to threats against me, I don't remember ever going into them with you. There were some. But what I think was much more hurtful is the dirty stuff at least the FBI pulled where it made a difference and with which it has its records loaded, one of the reasons I'm now spending so much time in an effort to leave an accurate record about us and my work. The present purpose is to defend the work from the intended uses of the false and defamatory records.

First, though, a story. When I could not get an appointment with the local cardiologist for a month or more after I learned he'd gotten the report from Johns Hopkins I wrote the Hopkins cardiologist to see if I could get modest relief from the restrictions I am still observing, to get a little ~~upper~~ upper-body exercise. I'm not supposed to lift more than 10 pounds, etc. I asked if I could sit and chop up small branches for kindling and compost, using a machete, things like that. If he was indulging a sense of humor, it is as good as yours. He said he'd have no objection to by exercising my arms in sewing but not to exhaust myself! I've written to find out if he was joking.

The most sophisticated threat I ever got came about 2 a.m. and at a time when I did not have either a working cassette recorder or a good means of recoding phone conversations. I'd had a decent cassette recorder but as I think I once mentioned, when all my checked-through luggage was intercepted it and the brand new portable were both ruined when I got them back. That recorder also was new. I'd been speaking in Minneapolis, my friend Gary my recent letter to whom I think I sent you having made the arrangements. So, when I went to my office to take the call, after the ringing awakened me, and I perceived the nature of the call, I reached into my desk and got the suction-cup device, rather primitive, that was used in recording calls and turned my old, small reel-to-reel recorder on. The recording was not of good quality but it was clear enough to be entirely understandable. I took the machine and the recording to the nearby State police barracks and they agreed it was a real threat.

This man, after talking to me for a while, along the line of worrying me if not making a direct threat, then plays parts of the soundtrack of the movie ~~Shane~~ to me. That was the story of the man Shane who is going to ~~kill~~ clear the bad guys out of an early western settlement and a killer who wears black gloves is brought to that town to kill him. So, I'm to worry about a killer.

The Washington ADL honcho had me in touch with the Baltimore County (Md.) police department, which had some sophisticated equipment, and they made a voice print in the event that same voice is recorded and identified. With what the State police told me and would tell the phone company, I went to the then local manager, who I'd known for years, and he told me where to take my office phone to have it wired for a direct tap, which meant good quality into the tape recorder, and I did that. - no longer have that phone, no longer having any such need.

I worked with the Balt. county police for some time, with their component handling the dangers from extremists. After I gave them to copy what I'd gotten from a source within the right-wing extremist thugs, The Minutemen, they asked me to turn my source over to them, I did, he refused to work with them and I lost him as a source. (I loaned the same material to the FBI, which returned it by hand and without any letter, having the strange belief that I would use any such letter to promote myself and associate myself with it. I got those records from it later.) I then gave all that material to the Univ. of Wisconsin, Stevens Point, where at that time I expected all my materials to go. I had no further need of it and I had a space problem I still have, despite all the many file cabinets and boxes. (I also gave it what survived storage in World War II of similar nature and all that Ed Dmytryk, of The Hollywood Ten, did not steal when he came to me for my help when they were before the Dies Committee. Dmytryk turned out to be an informer. He claims not to have

any recollection at all. I located him and wrote him.)

Most of the threats were aimed at "il and in all those instances, when I was not home. At least some of those times it was not generally known that I would not be home and a few of the times nobody knew I would not be. Men would ask her if she was not afraid that something would happen to me, things like that. There were a few times when I was home and a man would say nothing other than "Harold" and then breathe into the phone. I don't think I kept any record of most of these things, if any other than the Shane one, and I'm sure there were some I don't remember.

We never took them seriously, in the belief that if anyone meant other than intimidation they would not warn in advance.

As a Warren Commission witness, the New Orleans lawyer Dean Andrews, put it one Saturday afternoon when I was in his office and one of his gay clients called him in great consternation, "They don't hit by Western Union."

There were times when I was being tailed and when Jim Lesar and I were under surveillance in Memphis, on the King case. Robert Groden, co-author of High Treason, was to meet me at Penna Station in NYC. I got off the train and did not see him so I walked to a phone booth to phone him and when I did not get him got onto a subway to go somewhere. It happened that he was in the station, but not exactly where I was, and he saw a man follow me to the phone boothh linger while I was using the phone, and then follow me on the subway.

There was a time when I did a TV show that was under a bomb threat but that threat was not aimed at me. Which reminds me, it was not uncommon for callers-in to ask when I was on radio talk shows if I were not afraid of retaliation but there is no reason to believe those were not listeners who did wonder about it.

The bomb threat was against the San Francisco TV station on which the first or one of the first black mayors was to appear, Hatcher. The show was ~~Joe~~ Joe Dolan's. He and I went ahead with the show but Hatcher was not on it. I did his segment. And nothing happened.

Recently we discussed your hope that the changes in Nicaragua will result in better lives for the people there. I share the hope and the one way I see it is likely to be possible is the end of the economic and political war waged by the US against it, a matter notable avoided in the talk shows I've seen, including this week's Inside Washington where there was no mention of it at all. Yesterday's Post, which is anti-Sandinista and has supported the GOP parroting of Hitler's adventures there and elsewhere in Latin America, had two articles I forgot to clip for you. One said exactly what I had said earlier about the problems posed by the refusal of the Contra leadership to end their war (they've had and they'll continue to have one phony excuse after another) and the near certainty if they do not that the Sandanistas will take whatever steps they consider necessary to protect against them. Please note also that they were to have, by international agreement, to have been disbanded and been out of Honduras by December, as a condition also of the election. The Sandanistas did not hold to that, as they could have and in retrospect I think should have. In any event, there are about 12,000 armed Contras under what is largely fascist leadership and among those leaders, if not also among the troops, there are legitimate war criminals who can have fears for themselves. So, this part remains a serious problem. The other article was by a Nicaraguan PhD (I think Harvard) who is her leadership's economic honcho. He says that a year after the takeover, thanks to free-market advantages, they will be a showplace for the world and fully recovered. With this what the economic boss is willing to say, head for the tall timbers, "Nicaraguans! Disaster is what it really forecasts, as one needs no economic education to see. Until you have had personal experiences with them, as I have, you have no basis for even estimating the nuttiness they believe and spew forth. Especially those of the right.

From today's Post I enclose, on the chance it was not in the Times, its correspondent's account of the

barbarities visited upon their brothers and sisters by the Arabs in the west bank and Gaza strip. I've highlighted a few things for your attention. But imagine what can be expected- and what Israel has to expect- from those who, with or without kangaroo courts beat to a pulp, in public^{halls}, with steel rods and the like, those they accuse of collaborating with Israel. The wives of the suspects they first gangrape and they also beat to death, with stones. Even then burying some in the streets under piles of heaped-on stones. This story fails to give the total, except for a short period of recent time, of the victims of this inhuman fratricide. But on TV one night this past week it was about equal to or more than ^{half of} all the intifada deaths attributed to Israelis. And it now is greater than by Israel.

Imagine hacking a woman to death with axes! And by those who say, for attribution, that the PLO's supposed opting for a "political settlement" is merely "a political tactic."

Pregnant women murdered the same ways.

This and more like it leads me to believe that Arabs willing to be part of any formal talks with Israel looking to any election in the Arab territories are candidates for similar barbarities, as will their families be.

With any ultimate settlement (and I'm not suggesting or predicting one) imagine what it will be in Israel if it does not control the west bank and so much of its land by which I mean the current, official State of Israel, can be under direct fire from handheld artillery and rockets. Much of Israel will be about 9-10 miles wide, toward the north, and within easy range for these barbarians who've had little difficulty getting modern weapons and who can extort them or money for buying them from the wealthy Arabs in places like Saudi Arabia because of their proven willingness to assassinate.

I see no easy or likely solution, once the Arabs backed out on the Camp David agreement and Reagan, unilaterally, rewrote it.

I believe the more extreme Arabs will not accept anything less than a state and will not accept self-government without a state. Had they been willing to they'd have had it more than a decade ago.

I close with another reference to those threats. If we had had any fear of them at all we'd never have moved here and live in woods that at points are dense, in a house far enough from the road not to be noticed and for the most part blocked in vision from the road and neighbors. No special locks or other security measures and in warm weather we have with only the screen doors locked. None of the locks present any problem to people intending us harm. They can deter kids but little else. When we lived at Hyattstown we had such simple locks that skeleton keys from the 5 and 20 stores worked them. Used only to deter kids. I lock my car only when I'm downtown, which is not often, and there has never been any problem. I walk before daylight in the parking lot of the mall, where I'm the only one there and people drive by all the time to bypass the highway traffic.

Hardy